

4.0 BLOOD BOWL LEAGUES (v1.4)

Any experienced Blood Bowl coach will tell you that while one-off games may be fun, running a team over the course of a series of games is far more exciting. Not only do you have to worry about the tactics that your team will use in a single game, but you can also watch your team develop and grow into a real powerhouse team to rival even the mighty Reikland Reavers or the Gouged Eye. Running a Blood Bowl team in a league does create extra work and calls for quite a lot of commitment, but if you want to have the glory of leading your team through a long season to the Blood Bowl final itself, then the League rules are for you!

Games are played in stadiums, owned either by the Colleges of Magic or by large towns or cities. They are not normally owned by Blood Bowl teams themselves, though some teams do own their own stadiums (eg, the Reikland Reavers). Instead, teams travel round the Old World, moving from stadium to stadium and playing matches against any teams they meet.

The League rules are designed to recreate the way Blood Bowl teams travel round the Old World, moving from venue to venue to play games. In a way the teams are much more like a travelling company of actors, or a mercenary regiment, than the football teams of present day times. Because of this anarchic set-up it is up to each team manager to organise matches, set dates for games, and so on.

“Designers Note: The following rules replace the rules for leagues that appear in the Blood Bowl Handbook. Leagues using the old league rules can easily change over to the new ones; coaches simply need to work out the value of the team as described below, and start using the new team list presented in section DZ2.5. Any team rosters that are not ‘legal’ under the new rules can carry on using the players that are in the team, but any replacements should be purchased from the new rosters. Apothecaries will play in the next match, and then leave the team to be come freebooters.”

4.1 STARTING THE LEAGUE

A league consists of a group of teams (preferably at least four) who will play each other (and maybe other teams) over the course of a series of games. In order to set up the league the first thing you need to do is pick the ‘League Commissioner’, who should ideally be the most experienced coach in the group. The Commissioner has the responsibility of making sure that the league runs smoothly, and, most importantly, organising any tournaments that are played. The Commissioner can also keep track of how well all the teams are doing, and can even write a newsletter featuring match reports, league tables, facts and stats, and anything else he can think of! The Commissioner can be a coach of a team in the league, too, just so long as he doesn’t take advantage of the situation to help his team win any tournaments.

You can start playing league matches as soon as all the coaches taking part in the league have created their teams. It is up to the teams’ coaches to organise any matches that they play. A team can play as often as a coach likes, assuming that he can find enough opponents, of course! The only restriction is that a team may not play against the same opponent for more than two matches in a row. This means that a coach can play two

games against the same opponent, (roughly a full evening's play), but the next match must be against a different team.

If the Commissioner decides to allow it then coaches may run one or more teams at the same time. Obviously, this will mean that each individual team will play fewer games, as the coach's time will have to be split between the different teams he has in his stable. A coach may not swap money, players or anything else between the teams that he runs. For example, he may not make a 'special loan' from one of his teams to another, or swap players between the teams, and so on. Note that a coach can carry out such actions between one of his teams and a team run by another coach (assuming the other coach agrees, of course!), he just can't do it between two of his own teams.

4.1.1 The League Cap

Over time the players on a team improve, and they can increase the amount of money in their treasury, allowing them to buy players and other things for the team. Successful teams can be worth a fortune – in their heyday during the early days of Blood Bowl the Dwarf Giants were reputed to be worth in excess of 4,000,000 gold pieces! This made it difficult, if not impossible, for other teams to compete against the more successful teams in the league, and so to stop things getting out of hand the NAF imposed 'League Cap' of 2,000,000 gold pieces on the league. Teams that were worth this amount or more were no longer allowed to earn additional income, until the team dipped back down below the cap once more. Although the NAF is no longer in existence, the league cap continues to be used to this day.

To represent this, the league commissioner must set a League Cap, at between 1,500,000 gps to 3,000,000 gps. The higher the treasury cap, the more powerful teams can become. We recommend setting the cap at the lowest level when you first set up a league, as you can always increase it later on if you wish to.

4.2 TEAM ROSTER

Before you can start playing league matches, each coach must create a team as explained on page ???. This is where the columns previously unused come in. They include a number of columns and rows for recording important information that you will need to know when you are running a league team. How these extra rows and columns are used is explained in the rules that follow. Note that Star Players may not be hired when creating the team for League play, but can be hired as Freebooters at the start of the match (see 4.6.2). Star players may not be hired as a permanent member of the team.

4.2.1 Treasury

Each coach begins the league with a treasury of 1,000,000 gps with which to buy his team. Any money that is not spent should be recorded in the team's treasury and may be spent after any future match. A coach must keep track of how much money his team has in its treasury by recording the amount on his team roster.

4.2.2 Match Records

On the back of the team roster there is a Match Record Chart for recording information about the games that the team has played. Keep a record of the matches played by the team here. The coach should record the name of the opposition, the score and number of

casualties inflicted by each team, as well as the gate and match winnings, and any brief notes about the game.

4.3 INJURIES

Blood Bowl is a rough and dangerous sport, and players are often injured or killed while playing the game. Many Blood Bowl players sport scars from old injuries, while some have lost eyes, ears, noses and even whole limbs! Although most injuries can be recovered from given a bit of time, some are so serious that they can permanently affect a player. In one-off games this is not important – all you need to know is that the player is off the field for the rest of the game! – but in a league it is vital to know exactly what type of injury a player has suffered. This is where the Serious Injury table comes in...

If a player suffers a injury because a 10 or more is rolled for them on the Injury table, then the opposing coach is allowed to make a roll on the Serious Injury table.

The dice scores on the Serious Injury table run from 11 through to 68. Assuming that you don't have a 68 sided dice (not many people do), you need to roll a normal six-sided dice and the eight-sided dice used to scatter the ball. The six-sided dice counts as tens, so a score of 2=20, 4=40 etc, and the eight-sided dice counts for the units, so a score of 3=3, 5=5, etc. Then put the numbers together to get a score from 11 to 68. For example, if you rolled a '2' on the six-sided dice and a '3' on the eight-sided dice, then you would get a score of 23.

Having made the dice roll, look up the result on the Serious Injury table. The table lists exactly what has happened to the player, and describes any special effects the injury may have. The majority of the results simply cause the player to miss the next match, though some have more long-lasting effects. The coach of the player that suffered the injury should make a note of the effect of the serious injury on his team roster.

Serious Injury Table

D68	Result	Effect
11-38	Concussion	No long term effect
41	Broken Ribs	Miss next game
42	Groin Strain	Miss next game
43	Gouged Eye	Miss next game
44	Broken Jaw	Miss next game
45	Fractured Arm	Miss next game
46	Fractured Leg	Miss next game
47	Smashed Hand	Miss next game
48	Pinched Nerve	Miss next game
51	Damaged Back	Niggling Injury
52	Smashed Knee	Niggling Injury
53	Smashed Hip	-1MA

54	Smashed Ankle	-1MA
55	Serious Concussion	-1AV
56	Fractured Skull	-1AV
57	Smashed Collar Bone	-1ST
58	Broken Neck	-1AG
61-68	DEAD	DEAD!

Miss Next Game: Write an 'M' in the injuries box on the team roster, and rub it out at the end of the next match. Players missing a game do not count towards their team value when working out whether the team receives any inducements for playing the match (see 4.6.2).

Niggling Injury: Miss next game as above. In addition, write an 'N' in the injuries box on the team roster. Before each match you must roll one dice per Niggling Injury the player has suffered. If a 1 is rolled on any or the dice then the player must miss the match. Players missing a game do not count towards their team value when working out whether the team receives any inducements for playing the match (see 4.6.2).

-1 MA, ST, AG, AV: Miss next game as above. In addition, record the characteristic change on the team roster. However, no characteristic may be reduced by more than 2 points, and any injuries that would cause a further reduction are ignored.

DEAD: The player is dead, dead, dead! Remove them from your team roster.

4.4 STAR PLAYER POINTS

Most players are able to earn Star Player points (SPPs) in league matches. Star Player points are earned for scoring touchdowns, making complete passes, making interceptions, killing or injuring opposing players, and for earning 'Most Valuable Player' awards. Once a player has earned enough Star Player points he becomes entitled to an improvement and may roll on the 'Improvement table'. Players who survive long enough will progress to become Star Players, with special abilities and skills that they have picked up over the course of their long career on the Blood Bowl field.

The team roster includes boxes so coaches can keep track of the number of Star Player points their players earn during a match. Each time a player does something that earns him any Star Player points his coach should put a tick in the appropriate box on the roster for each point they have earned. At the end of the match count up the number of new ticks for each player, and upgrade their total score of Star Player points accordingly.

Star Player points are earned for performing the following actions:

Complete Pass (COMP): A player who makes an accurate pass that is caught by the intended receiver earns 1 Star Player point. An accurate pass is called a 'completion' or complete pass. Note that the ball must be caught by the player it was being thrown to, otherwise it is not complete!

Touchdowns (TD): A player who scores a touchdown earns 3 Star Player points.

Interceptions (INT): If a player successfully makes an Interception after making an Interception roll then they earn 2 Star Player points.

Casualties (CAS): If a player kills, seriously injures, or badly hurts an opposing player then they earn 2 Star Player points. The points are only earned if the player blocks an opponent or is blocked by an opponent himself. Casualties inflicted in any other way do not count for Star Player points. Killing, injuring or badly hurting a player is generally referred to as inflicting a 'casualty'. For example "He inflicted five casualties in a single match!", or "That takes him to 17 casualties this season..."

Most Valuable Player (MVP): One player from each team, chosen by their coach, is awarded a Most Valuable Player award at the end of the match. A Most Valuable Player award earns the player 5 Star Player points. IMPORTANT: A team that concedes a match must give its MVP to the opposing team (ie, the winning coach gets two MVPs and the losing coach gets none).

Star Player Points Table

Per Passing Completion	1 SPP
Per Casualty	2 SPPs
Per Interception	2 SPPs
Per Touchdown	3 SPPs
Per MVP award	5 SPPs

SPPs	Title	Improvement Rolls
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0-5	Rookie	None
6-15	Experienced	One
16-30	Veteran	Two
31-50	Emerging Star	Three
51-75	Star Player	Four
76+	Super Star	Five

<<< Note that skills cap out at a maximum of five >>>

4.4.1 Improvement Rolls

As players earn more Star Player points they go up in levels of experience and are entitled to make Improvement rolls. All players start out as Rookies with no Star Player Points. Once a player has earned 6 points he becomes 'Experienced' and is entitled to his first Improvement roll. Each time that the player goes up another level he is entitled to another Improvement roll. The Star Player Points Table lists the number of Star Player points that are required to reach each different level.

At the end of the match work out how many Star Player points each of the players in your team has earned, and look up their scores on the Star Player Points Table. If the player has earned enough points to go up a level, then immediately make a roll for them on the

Improvement table. To make the Improvement roll, roll two dice, add the scores together, and look up the result on the Improvement table.

Improvement Table

2D6 Improvement

2-9	New Skill
10	Increase the player's MA by 1 point
11	Increase the player's AG by 1 point
12	Increase the player's ST by 1 point

4.4.2 New Skills

On a Star Player roll of 2-9 the player is allowed to take a new skill. The skills that may be selected for a player are limited depending on the race of the player and the position that they play. The skills are split into categories. The category that each skill belongs to is noted in the Skills rules (see 3.0).

Each team list includes a Player Skill list. This shows which skills are available to each different type of player. For example, Human Catchers can take General Skills and Agility Skills, Human Throwers can take General Skills and Passing Skills, and so on. Within these restrictions the coach of the player is allowed to freely choose any skill from the Skills section of this rulebook. Remember to record the player's new skill on the team roster.

Traits may only be taken on a double (see 4.4.4) or if no remaining new skills are available for this player to take. Specialist Skills and Racial Characteristics can never be learned; players either have them when they start or they may never have them at all. Skills, traits and racial characteristics may never be removed from a player, no matter how much a coach may wish for them to go!

4.4.3 Characteristic Increases

A Star Player roll of 10-12 will increase one of the player's characteristics as shown on the Improvement Table – simply record the new value on the team roster. Alternatively, the coach may choose to take a new skill instead (see 4.4.2). No characteristic may ever be increased by more than 2 points over its starting value. Any additional increases must be taken as new skills instead.

4.4.4 Rolling Doubles

Normally a player is only allowed to choose a skill from the categories listed on the Player Skill List. However, if the Star Player roll was a double (ie, 1, 1 or 2, 2, etc), then the coach may ignore the result rolled on the Star Player Roll table (even if it was a characteristic increase) and instead may take any skill they like for the player apart from a specialist or racial skill. The restrictions for the player's race and the position he plays are ignored in this case, so a Human Catcher could take a Strength skill, for example.

Alternatively, instead of gaining any skill, the player's coach may choose to give them a single trait. However, the trait must belong to a category that the player can choose from.

For example, if a double were rolled for a Human Catcher then he could be given any skill, or a General or Agility trait.

4.4.5 Improvements & Player Costs

Every player has cost. This amount is recorded when they are hired. As they get better (gain skills or characteristic increases) their value increases. To reflect this, whenever a player rolls on the Improvement table, their cost must be increased on the team roster by the amount shown on the table below.

Cost Modifiers table

New Skill: +20,000

Traits, Mutations and Skills that can only be taken on a double: +30,000

+1 MA: +30,000

+1 AG: +40,000

+1 ST: +50,000

4.4.6 Star Players & Star Player Points

The Star Players who come on Star Player cards or from the Official Star Player list on the back cover cannot earn any more Star Player points. They are considered to have peaked and cannot get any better.

4.5 PLAYING LEAGUES MATCHES

League matches have their own sequence of play, which involves some pre-match and post-match action, as well as the actual game. Follow this sequence through for each league match you play, including any tournament matches.

1. Pre-Match Sequence

1. Roll on Weather table
2. Hire Freebooters
3. Roll for Niggling Injuries

2. The Match

1. Roll the Gate
 2. Receiving Team Turn
 3. Kicking Team Turn
- Etc...

3. Post-Match Sequence

1. Improvement Rolls
2. Update Team Roster

4.6 PRE-MATCH SEQUENCE OF PLAY

The pre-match sequence must be used before every league match that is played. The sequence is split into three separate steps that are described below:

4.6.1 The Weather

One coach rolls on the Weather table printed on the Blood Bowl reference sheet to see what the weather will be like for the match.

4.6.2 Hire Freebooters

Not every talented Blood Bowl player gets swept into one of the big-name teams. There are some who are mistakenly discarded or replaced, those who put too high a value on their services, and there are those who, for whatever reason, don't wish to be associated with a single team. At least one common-sense motivation for the latter is that they don't have to play unless they want to! Over the years, then, there has developed a class of player who sell their services on a match by match basis. These players are called Freebooters.

Freebooters travel from match to match, arriving a few hours before game time. They congregate at an agreed location, usually a local tavern, where the coaches of the teams can meet them and make offers. Hiring a Freebooter is not cheap, but if you've got the money then they can be the key to winning the match!

Teams can hire Freebooters by using money from their treasury, or by receiving an 'inducement' from the stadium owner to play the match, as described below. Freebooters only ever play one match for the team, and are not a permanent part of the roster. Freebooters cannot use Team, Trophy or Leader re-rolls as their lack of practice with the team makes it difficult for them to play efficiently with the rest of the players.

Treasury: A team that has spare money in his treasury may spend it on Freebooters if desired.

Inducements: Teams that are at a disadvantage are allowed to hire Freebooters in order to even the odds. In this case extra money is offered by the stadium owner as an inducement to help convince an team to take part in a match against a superior opponent (and thus allowing the stadium owner to recoup his losses and more through tickets sales and merchandise!). To represent this an underdog in a match is given a certain amount of gold that can be used to hire Freebooters. The amount of money is equal to the *difference* between the total value of the underdog team and the total value of the opposing team. The value of a team is worked out by adding up the cost of the team's players (including extra costs for improvements), coaching staff, team re-rolls, and treasury. Players that are missing the game due to injury do not count towards this total. For example, if one coach had a team worth 1,000,000 gold pieces while his opponent had a team worth 1,250,000 gold pieces, then the first coach would be allowed to spend 250,000 gold pieces on Freebooters. Any of the extra money that is not spent on Freebooters is lost and may not be added to the team treasury.

Freebooters are selected from the following list. Note that limitations and special rules from the team lists apply, so Goblin teams still pay double to hire Star Players that are not Goblins or Trolls, etc. As some coaches can take a *very* long time deciding which Freebooters to hire, there is a four-minute time limit on selecting them. Freebooters that are hired may take the number of players in the team to more than 16.

0-1 Star Players: You may hire a Star Player that is allowed to play for your team. Unless your league commissioner decides otherwise, deaths and serious injuries inflicted on Star Players are waived after the match.

0-2 Journeymen: You may hire a player from your team roster. The normal limits on the number of players allowed in each position do apply to Journeymen. Remember that the Journeymen you hire may not use team or leader re-rolls.

0-1 Wizard: You may hire a Wizard to help your team during the match for 150,000 gold pieces. See the rules for Wizards below (4.8).

0-1 Apothecaries: You may hire an Apothecaries to help your team during the match for 100,000 gold pieces (twice the normal amount). This may allow a team to have two apothecaries (one on their roster, and a freebooter hired at double normal cost for the one match).

0-3 Bribes: Each bribe costs 100,000 gold pieces and allows you to ignore one call by the referee for a player who has committed a foul to be sent off, or a player armed with a secret weapon to be banned from the match. Each bribe may be used once per match.

0-4 Intensive Training Sessions: Each intensive training session costs 100,000 gold pieces and allows you to take one extra Team re-roll for the match.

0-5 Freelance Coaches/Cheerleaders: You may hire up to five freelance assistant coaches or cheerleaders, or any combination of the two that adds up to five in total, for a cost of 10,000 gold pieces each.

4.6.3 Niggling Injuries

In a league it is possible for players to pick up nasty ‘niggling injuries’ that can cause them to miss a match (see the Injury rules). If any of the players in a team has suffered a niggling injury then their coach must roll now to see if the player has to miss this game.

Roll one dice for each niggling injury: if any of the dice roll a 1 then the player must miss this match. The player only ever misses the one game, no matter how many 1s were rolled. If all of the dice come up with scores of 2 or more then the player may take part in the match as normal. Note that players who miss a match because of a niggling injury do still count towards the value of the team for the match.

4.7 POST MATCH SEQUENCE

You must go through the following five steps after each and every league match that you play:

4.7.1 Improvement Rolls

In league matches it is possible for players to earn Star Player points which may give them Improvement rolls at the end of the match. This phase is used by each coach to allocate MVPs, update the Star Player points the players in their team have earned, and make any Improvement rolls for the players in their team.

4.7.2 Update Team Roster

This phase is used to make sure that both teams' rosters are up to date and filled in correctly. Players and coaching staff may be hired and fired, and any notes or points of special interest can be recorded on the team roster at this time. There are spaces on the back of the roster that can be used to keep a record of the results of the matches that a team has played. By the way, although most Blood Bowl coaches will stoop to using almost any underhand tactic in order to win a game, falsifying a team roster is such a heinous crime that no right thinking coach should even consider doing such a thing. Enough said, I hope...

Carry out the following steps to update the roster.

1. Delete any players that have been killed from the roster, and record any changes to a player's cost for improvements or injuries.
2. Check to see if the team has reached the league cap yet. If the total value of a team (less the value of players or coaching staff that have been killed), then the team is said to have 'reached the cap' and may not receive any winnings for playing matches (see step 3). Note that it is possible (indeed likely) for the total value of a team to continue to grow once it has reached the cap, as the value of players can continue to go up as they learn skills. Also note that players that missed the match are counted towards the value of the team when checking to see if the cap has been reached.
3. Generate winnings for the match as long as the team has not 'reached the cap'. Each team receives a number of gold pieces equal to the total gate for the match, rounded up to the nearest 10,000 gold pieces. The winner of the match receives a bonus of 10,000 gold pieces, while the team that caused the most casualties (as defined by the number of players in the Dead and Injured players box, no matter how they got there) receives a 10,000 gold piece bonus as well. For example, if 49,000 fans turned up to watch a game then each team would receive 50,000 gold pieces, the winner would get a 10,000 gold piece bonus, and the team that inflicted the most casualties would receive a 10,000 gold piece bonus. **IMPORTANT:** Teams that concede a match or have reached the league cap do not receive any winnings.
4. Let go any players or coaching staff from the team who are no longer wanted.
5. Roll 2D6. If the total is greater than the winning team's current fan factor, then their fan factor goes up by one point. If *either* dice rolled a 1, then the losing team's fan factor goes down by 1 point. In the case of a tie both team's fan factor goes up by 1 point on a double 6, and down by 1 point on a double 1.
6. Increase the team's re-rolls by 1 if desired. Adding a re-roll costs double the amount shown on the team list, but only adds the basic (un-doubled) cost to the

total value of the team.

7. Decide if you wish to spend any money in the team treasury to buy new players and coaching staff for the team.
8. Work out the total value of the team and record it on the roster. The value of a team is worked out by adding up the cost of the team's players (including extra costs for improvements), support staff, team re-rolls, and treasury. Do not include the value of any players that will be forced to miss their next match due to injury.

4.8 WIZARDS

Wizards, just like everybody else in the Old World, are keen sports fans and many are fanatically loyal in support of their chosen team. It is not surprising then that soon after the game was born, Wizards started 'helping out' the team they supported with carefully selected spells. Soon games were awash with magic as rival Wizards battled to give their team the edge. In the end the Colleges of Magic were forced to insist that only teams that had bought a special license from the Colleges of Magic were allowed to have magical assistance. They limited this assistance to one spell per match, and even this had to be chosen from a very limited selection and cast by an officially appointed Colleges of Magic team Wizard. Wizards and fans alike soon realised that what they really wanted to see Blood Bowl not a spellcasting contest, so the new rules were soon universally accepted.

Any team is allowed to hire a Wizard for a match, as long as they can afford the whopping 150,000 gold piece hire fee charged by the College of Magic concerned. No team may hire more than one Wizard per match. Wizards can be represented in games with one of the Wizard models from the range of Citadel miniatures for Warhammer. This isn't strictly necessary, but looks a lot better than representing a Wizard with a bottle top or tiddlywink!

Once per game, the Wizard is allowed to cast either a *fireball spell* or a *lightning bolt spell*. Wizards may only cast spells at the start of their own team's turn, after the Turn marker has been moved but before any player's perform an action.

Fireball: Choose a target square anywhere on the field. Roll one dice to hit each model (from either team) that is either in the target square or a square adjacent to it may be hit. If the 'to hit' roll beats the player's Agility then they are knocked over. If it is equal to or under their Agility they manage to dodge the fireball's blast. Make an Armour roll for any player that is knocked over as if they had been knocked over by a player with the Mighty Blow skill. You may re-roll the 'to hit' roll *and* the Armour roll if the player concerned is located in the target square rather than adjacent to it. If a player on the moving team is knocked over by a fireball, then the moving team does not suffer a turnover unless the player was carrying the ball at the time.

Lightning Bolt: Pick a player anywhere on the pitch, and roll 2D6. If the score beats the player's Agility, then he has been hit by the lightning bolt. If the roll is less than or equal to the players agility then he manages to dodge out of the way. A player hit by a lightning

bolt is knocked over and must make an armour roll as if hit by a player with the mighty blow skill.